



# Seattle Design Commission

**APPROVED**  
**MINUTES OF THE MEETING**  
**4 November 2004**

Gregory J. Nickels,  
*Mayor*

David Spiker  
*Chair*

Charles Anderson

Pam Beyette

Karen Kiest

Hannah McIntosh

Anindita Mitra

Sheri Olson

Nic Rossouw

Donald Royse

Darrell Vange

Guillermo Romano,  
*Executive Director*

Layne Cubell,  
*Commission Coordinator*

Projects Reviewed

Fifth Avenue NE Street Improvements

Northgate Open Space and Pedestrian Draft Plan

Environmental Action Agenda/Sustainable Design

Convened: 10:30am

Adjourned: 4:30pm

Commissioners Present

David Spiker, Chair

Karen Kiest

Anindita Mitra

Sheri Olson

Nic Rossouw

Don Royse

Darrell Vange

Staff Present

Guillermo Romano

Layne Cubell

Tom Iurino

Carrie Duncan



Department of Planning and  
Development

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November 4 Commission Business

**ACTION ITEMS**

A. TIMESHEETS

B. MINUTES FROM 07 OCTOBER: APPROVED—DUNCAN

**DISCUSSION ITEMS**

C. OUTSIDE COMMITMENTS—ALL

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

D. WATERFRONT ADVISORY TEAM—11/10, 3-5 PM, RM. L280

E. MONORAIL REVIEW PANEL MEETING—11/8, 4-7 PM, RM. L280

F. DC/PC CHAIRS AND STAFF YEAR END CHECK-IN—11/23,  
12-2 PM

G. COMMISSIONER FAREWELL/WELCOME RECEPTION—  
11/19, 5-8 PM

H. DESIGN COMMISSION ANNUAL RETREAT—12/2, 8:30 AM-  
12:30 PM, CENTRAL LIBRARY

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**4 Nov 2004 Project: Fifth Avenue NE Street Improvements**

Phase: Schematic Design

Previous Reviews: 19 February 2004 (Preliminary Design)

Presenters: Jackie Kirn, Office of Policy and Management

Sandra Woods, Seattle Department of Transportation

Amy Yamabe, Seattle Department of Transportation

Shane Dewald, Seattle Department of Transportation

Attendees: Benson Shaw, Artist in Residence, Department of Planning and Development

Lyle Bicknell, Department of Planning and Development

Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 169| DC00327)

**Action: The Commission would like to thank the team for presenting the schematic design for this project and would like to make the following comments and recommendations.**

- **Encourages proponents to take a bolder approach, work to clarify the design, and achieve a greater vision for the streetscape. States that the placement of street trees and medians appears ad hoc and inconsistent;**
- **Suggests that proponents make it clear that this is a commitment to a pedestrian-oriented environment;**
- **Appreciates the use of street trees along 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, but encourages proponents to look closer at whether the current pattern of tree grates works to create the best pedestrian environment. States that longer, narrower planters would seem to be more effective;**
- **Further encourages proponents to make the planting areas and paving grid work together in a more creative and coherent way;**
- **Suggests that proponents explore ways to accommodate future streetscape improvements as the environment changes in the neighborhood;**
- **Strongly supports having all four crosswalks at the 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue/Mall Entry Drive intersection;**
- **Looks forward to reviewing the project again in Design Development;**
- **6:1 in favor of approving schematic design.**

The SDOT team updated the Commission on the overall concepts of the Northgate Mall site, and discussed the following projects: unanimous consensus on the Thornton Creek Channel Project; the new Mithun/Lorig development at the South lot; the addition of new retail space at the mall; the Sound Transit Light Rail station and park-and-ride facilities; and the CTIP for the area. New urban design elements of the site include innovative storm water drainage, interlocking pavers at crosswalks, and an ecological approach to the site and street design in the area on a large scale.

Proponents reported the results of the 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE Streetscape Northgate Stakeholder Sub-Committee meeting that took place on 1 November, and stated that the team will respond to the sub-committee's report at a later date. The design approach taken with regard to street improvements include:

- Wider sidewalks: 13' wide on the east side, 8' clear and 5' tree grades;
- Winding asphalt path on 165<sup>th</sup> Street;
- Aligned curb cuts at the Mall and Civic Center;
- Planting strips;
- Ecological design and water feature.

The re-bidding of the Northgate Civic Center led to a delay of improvements, but construction will begin in January 2006.

### **Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns**

- Encourages proponents to look at the long term parking needs and garage plan and the full build-out desires of developers.
- Asks if there is funding for the Building Green Study.
- Asks about the lane widths on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, and if the scheme calls for bike lanes.
  - Proponents stated that the lane widths range from 10'-12'. The scheme does not include bike lanes.
- Asks if there is an on-street package.
  - Proponents stated that it is not precluded, but SDOT is conducting a larger transportation study.
- Asks proponents to clarify the size of the tree pit, stating the more generous the better. Asks about plant materials.
  - Proponents stated that they are 5' square, but could be reduced to 4' wide.
  - Plant materials include Norwegian Maples. The tree pits would include low plants at the edges. The project also calls for planted median strips that are modeled after Lake City Way's Multimodal Project. All plantings are appropriate to the urban area.
- Asks about bus stop locations.
  - Proponents stated that the location of the bus stops at the site will be coordinated with the Civic Center and METRO. The bus stops will include 20 pedestrian scale lighting fixtures in addition to streetlights.
- Asks if proponents have considered the tree pit intervals and the future package.
  - Proponents stated that they have been thought of, and can be fine tuned in the construction documents.
- Suggests that proponents try to match the pedestrian lights on both sides of the street.
  - Proponents stated that it can not be done in an unconventional style in a large area for maintenance and replacement reasons.
- States that proponents need to balance design goals, public safety, and standards.
- States that the design seems to be too haphazard. Suggests that proponents clean it up and make it more about design. As it stands, it seems to be too random and incoherent. All details seem to be

working against one another.

- States that proponents should strive for consistent geometries, tree plantings, and tree types.
  - Proponents stated that two types of trees will be used because they need to overhead the power lines.
- Suggests that proponents line up the trees and plants in the scheme to show design intervention.
- States that rarely do plans of systematic order get experienced on the street that way.
- States that proponents need to make the street more pedestrian-friendly. Encourages bold statements about the commitment to clarify pedestrians vs. vehicular efficiency. Both can not exist.
- Encourages proponents to think about the context of Northgate. It's not very pedestrian-friendly. Need to look at LT future as well.
- Suggests that the turning radius is the same for all entries and crosswalks at all four corners of the site.

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**4 Nov 2004 Project: Northgate Urban Design Framework**

Phase: Staff Briefing

Previous Review: Northgate Library, Community Center, and Park: 19 February 2004 (Design Development); 6 November 2003 (Schematic Design); 17 July 2003 (Conceptual Design); 20 February 2003 (Site Plan Follow-up); 6 February 2003 (Pre-Design)

Presenter: Jackie Kirn, Office of Policy and Management  
Lyle Bicknell, Department of Planning and Development  
Guillermo Romano, Department of Planning and Development  
Kristian Kofoed, Department of Planning and Development  
Benson Shaw, Artist in Residence, Department of Planning and Development

Attendees: Elizabeth Martin, Seattle Planning Commission  
Sandra Woods, Seattle Department of Transportation  
Shane Dewald, Seattle Department of Transportation  
Amy Yamabe, Seattle Department of Transportation

Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 220 | DC00341)

**Summary: The Commission appreciates the presentation and commends the City's commitment to forging interdepartmental connections, as well as working with Benson Shaw, DPD artist in Residence, in developing a public art plan for Northgate. The Commission would like to make the following comments and recommendations.**

- **Commends the Draft Open Space and Pedestrian Connections Plan and the Concept Map and drawings presented by Lyle Bicknell that balances immediate, practical opportunities to improve the pedestrian environment with larger, long-range plans to forge connections between Northgate and North Seattle Community College;**
- **Supports the compilation of a Northgate Notebook by DPD staff;**
  - **Encourages an internal document for city staff rather than one geared toward the public;**
  - **Suggests that it be expandable and adaptable over time;**
- **Encourages artist Benson Shaw to consider the three-dimensional experience, in addition to paving patterns in locating places for public art;**
- **Encourages exploration of a larger variety of types of public art beyond paving patterns and tiles. Encourages large scale, wider variety, and avoiding literal works;**
- **Encourages investigation of the public art for Northgate at all scales, from a strong overall concept down to the scale of the car and pedestrian;**
- **Appreciates how the Open Space and Pedestrian Connections Plan pushes beyond SDOT standards;**
- **Acknowledges the importance of the Planning Commission as chief advocates for the 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Streetscape Plan from 2002 and the more recent Pedestrian and Open Space Plan;**
- **Stresses the important emphasis on interagency collaboration in the many concurrent planning efforts underway at Northgate.**

### Northgate Open Space and Pedestrian Connections Draft Plan:

A Planning Commission-sponsored Pedestrian Connections Workshop in March 2004 produced recommendations on design vignettes of various “what if” scenarios and diagnostic assessments. The plan will be carried forward in CTIP as the pedestrian component of the larger Northgate plan.

Both the map and Plan address improving existing links across I-5, add new lights near Seattle Community College, seeks to acquire parcels across Thornton Creek, create a new neighborhood business district near the mall, and add bicycle lanes along 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue.

Recommendations that stemmed from the design vignettes include recreating 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue on the south side of the mall, a skybridge that crosses I-5 (may tie in with light rail), pedestrian lanes along Northgate Way that are separate from traffic, and access to the Thornton Creek corridor.

### Northgate UD Notebook:

The Commission was introduced to a non-technical Summary Book and Catalogue. The Notebook is a summary of all that has occurred at Northgate, and will serve as a useful tool for City staff, as well as community members and developers.

The Notebook outlines the history and background of Northgate, as well as current (2000-2006) and future (2006-2010) planning efforts.

### Art Plan:

The Art Plan focuses on pedestrian enhancement as an overarching theme for art in and around Northgate. The Plan seeks to point out art opportunities based on the distillation of input from various sources, and encourages artists to look for art that is different than is typically seen in Seattle. Art in the area will most likely be paid for incrementally based on the scope of projects.

### **Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns**

- Asks if the Open Space and Pedestrian Connections Plan is part of the larger framework for the 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue street design.
  - Proponents stated that it is, and referenced the 2002 5th Avenue Concept Plan.
- Encourages proponents to incorporate design guidelines for future public investment by KC and ST with regards to the Open Space and Pedestrian Connections Plan.
- Encourages proponents to examine the potential connections across I-5 to North Seattle Community College.
  - Proponents stated that the new improvements are just beginning, and are very excited about potential linkages between I-5 and NSCC.
- Suggests that proponents keep the Northgate UD Notebook flexible, with the potential to expand it in the future.
- Encourages proponents to seek less literal art and to be innovative in the art selection with regards to the Art Plan.
- Appreciates the comprehensive approach to the Art Plan.

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**4 Nov 2004 Project: Environmental Action Agenda/Sustainable Design**

Phase: Staff Briefing

Previous Review: 19 February 2004 (Sustainable Building Program Briefing); 18 September 2003 (Sustainable Design Checklist); 15 August 2002 (Environmental Action Agenda Briefing)

Presenters: Steve Nicholas, Office of Sustainability and Environment  
Richard Gelb, Office of Sustainability and Environment/DPR

Time: 1 hour (SDC Ref. # 220 | DC00315)

**Summary:** The Commission very much appreciates and continues to enthusiastically support the City's macro/micro approach to sustainability, as presented by the Office of Sustainability and the Environment (OSE) and its Sustainable Building Coordinator at Parks, and would like to make the following comments.

- Appreciates the update on the citywide Environmental Action Agenda (EAA) and recognizes that it is important to have a broad philosophy at the City level and also important to give City departments a free rein to develop suitable, although coordinated, approaches to sustainability. This ensures the City's approach is not "top down," but rather integrated and appropriate for the departments. It also provides a more detailed, diverse, and dynamic effort citywide. Parks, as stewards of the City's greatest open space resources, has a large role to play and seems to be stepping up to the challenge;
- Supports the next tier of sustainability—moving beyond the project, beyond the parcel, to the level of the neighborhood;
- Appreciates the description of the three key elements of sustainability—environment, economy, and society—and feels it is critical to recognize society as being the support of this three-legged chair;
- Appreciates hearing that operations and maintenance implications (O&M) at Parks is a critical measure of pragmatic sustainability for the department;
- Appreciates the level of detail incorporated into the project accounting sheets which provide a useful means for measuring achievements in sustainability for Parks staff;
- Looks forward to future updates on this important topic.

Environmental Action Agenda:

The EAA promotes healthy urban environments for all, and seeks to protect and restore the environment, enhance neighborhood health and livability, and improve environmental justice. The EAA serves several different purposes:

- Inventory
- Strategy
- Communication tool (internal and external)
  - Documents are printed/posted on the web
  - Quarterly newsletter: Sustain *This!*
  - Annual progress report



Key players involved with the EAA include City departments and the Environmental Coordinating Committee, the Mayor's Urban Sustainability Advisory Panel, environmental activists, the Mayor and the Mayor's Office, and City Council. Elements that are driving the Mayor's efforts include community conditions, city government leverage points, and the Mayor's priorities.

The EAA is to be continued and expanded, with a strong focus on sustainable design of buildings, infrastructure, and neighborhoods. The EAA also seeks to focus on, and practice sustainable design on the next generation of buildings in the City, such as those included in the Fire and Safety Levy, the City's Green Building Program, the Seattle Public Utilities Natural Drainage Program, and Parks' Sustainable Building/Infrastructure Program. The EAA seeks to promote sustainable design through the Office of Housing's SeaGreen Program, SCL/SPU's LEED/BuiltGreen Incentive Program, DPD's LEED Marketing Program, the Sustainable Development Resource Center, SPU's Green Home Remodeling Program, and neighborhood-scale efforts. The Green Seattle Initiative sponsored by OSE, Parks, DPD, SPU, and DON focuses on how to save what is left of urban forests. The Commission may be collaborating with OSE in the future to promote the success of LEED green buildings and to encourage them on a larger, neighborhood scale.

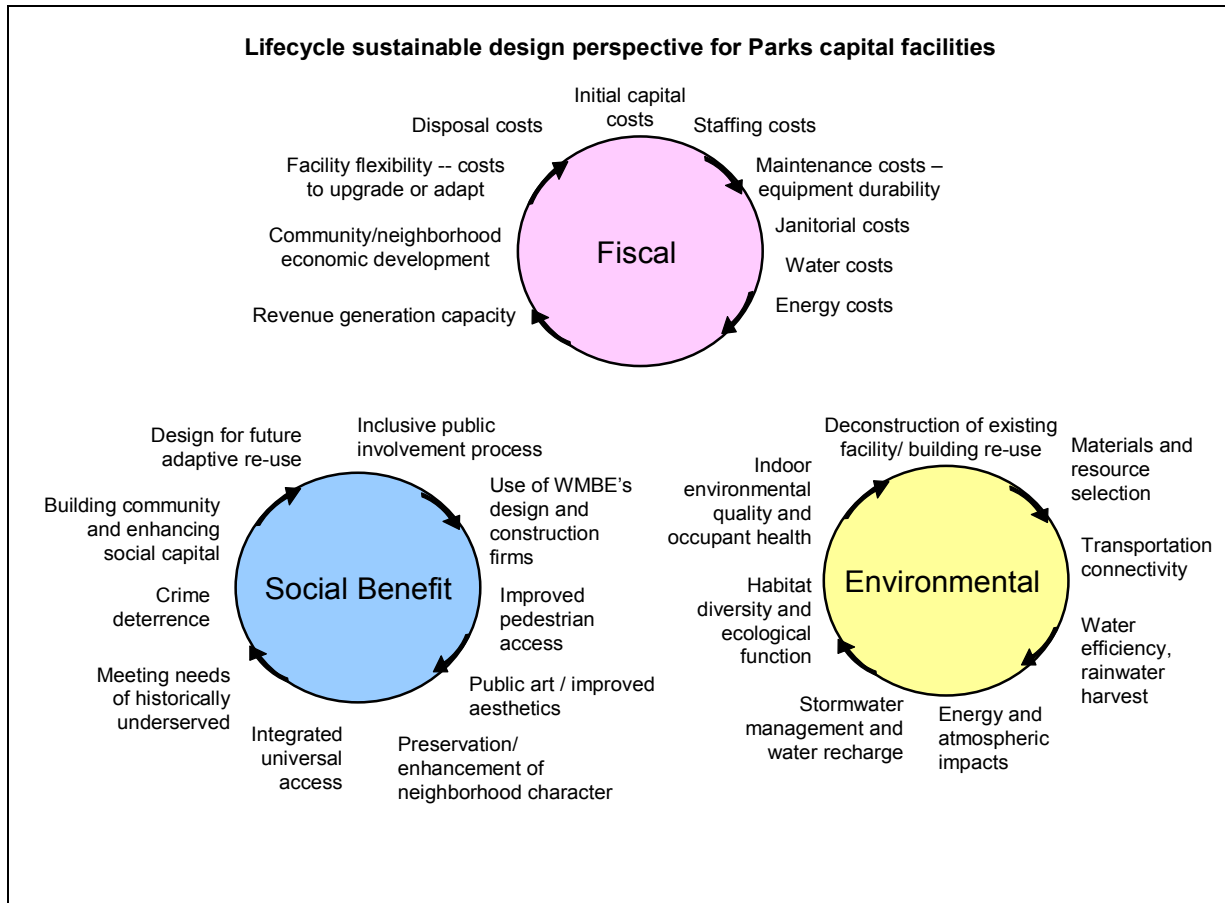
#### **Sustainable Design Checklist:**

The Checklist began with work in the Parks Department to define what sustainable design means beyond LEED certification for buildings in the City. Design considerations include the cost of maintaining facilities when determining sustainability.

Parks sought out a tool for addressing all capital projects, both Community Center Levy projects and ProParks projects equitably and consistency with a menu of features to screen possibilities. A full project lifecycle perspective was considered including :

- Fiscal: Initial costs, and costs over time
- Environmental performance
- Social benefit

These perspectives were then translated into a scorecard that can be rolled up into a report card and incorporated into the Citywide EAA through Parks' Environmental Management System (EMS).



Goals of the program at Parks include:

- Reduce system-wide operational and maintenance costs;
- Reduce initial and ongoing adverse (global) impacts to the environment;
- Increase the (local) ecological function of landscape, forest, and aquatic resources;
- Enhance social capital, build community and increase the comfort, health, and safety of parks visitors and building occupants.

#### **Key Commissioner Comments and Concerns**

- Asks if there are opportunities for the DC to have input on the Checklist.
  - Proponents stated that there are opportunities for the DC to partner with OSE once again on an Issue Paper. States that it would be good to have goals for each year, and that users find the Checklist very helpful.
- States that DC is interested, but the Checklist would need to be broader and more conceptual for use with all departments.
- Commends the work that has been done to date. States that it would be great to have the DC involved, but would want to advocate bold principles. Suggests that this Checklist is a document that would not be used by the DC, since they do not do that specific level of review.

- Asks how fiscally responsible the sustainable design record or experience is over time.
  - Proponents stated that there needs to be a balance of construction with operational costs.
- Sees the Checklist as a mechanism to make choices and decisions. States that it is a great tool
- Asks how the Commission could be involved in terms of their work on big transportation projects, neighborhood civic projects and subarea plans such as those at Northgate, etc. Neighborhood plans seem like a good guide for this work.
  - Proponents suggested creating a tool that would articulate the Commission's expectations of project managers for sustainable design. This may not be in the form of an Issue Paper or a checklist. Maybe an internal document, much like the DC's own vacation review guidelines which has been helpful in that way.
- The Commission might consider how each project will contribute to the City's sustainable design at both the macro and micro scale. It would be good to have this included in any given project's design principles.